

Parish Church of St. Luke, Formby



Parish Magazine Extracts
March 2020

READER'S LETTER

Andrews Close

The March wind doth blow and we shall have snow, but "what about Global Warming?" you may say. And yet March is the month that makes us feel that spring is on the way. Just look at the bulbs that are blooming all over the place. It's a time of newness, new challenges

Mothering Sunday is March 22nd and as a special time for families and friends it seems more able to survive all the various commercial pressures, largely because it is the children who bring the gifts and cards, many of which they will have made themselves. And it is this particular personal touch which makes the day so rewarding. It seems to belong to another age when children would pick flowers from the hedgerows to take home to their mothers. Happy days!

All the thirty-one days of March are in Lent this year, traditionally a time for people to give up one or more of life's pleasures. There are those who, as well as giving up, will be taking up something to benefit others. So don't just give up something but see what you can achieve with the money or time saved! A time for reflection, reading, taking part in study groups and trying hard to discover what God wants of us rather than what we want of God. He will always answer our prayers; the snag is that if we don't get the answer we want we question the existence of God.

Walking on our Formby beaches is as good as anything for getting things into perspective. There is of course the movement of the tides with no day being quite the same as the last. Why do some tides come right up the beach and others seem to stop halfway? Then there is the multiplicity of marine life; all those shells that accumulate day by day - eventually to become sand again. There are so many wonders in this world, and some of them are quite literally under our feet.

The fifth Sunday of Lent at the end of the month marks the beginning of Passiontide when we walk with Christ as he rides into Jerusalem and we relive

the events from Palm Sunday to Easter Day.

I began with March as the month when spring is on the way, yet what we call summer time begins on 29th March so don't forget to put your clocks forward!

Chris Mulford (Reader emeritus)

BOOK WORM?

Books have played a great part in my life. Books to be grappled with for exams. Books to be read for pleasure. All kinds of books have filled my life from an early age. Living the best part of my ministry in large vicarages has meant that I could accommodate a large library which grew like Topsy over the years. Then came the crunch of retirement as I downsized to come back to Formby where my parents had lived from 1946. So I sold my entire library, lock, stock and barrel, only to be caught later rummaging through the bookseller's bookshelves for books that I should never have let go! When I tried to buy them back he said, 'Oh take them, I shan't be able to sell them anyway - especially not that Greek New Testament.' He added, 'Have another look round, save you coming back.' So I did and went away happy clutching old friends. I can often be found 'looking for treasures' in his second hand book emporium in the Blue Coat School in Liverpool. We greet each other as old friends now.



So, dear reader, eighteen years after I retired I am somewhat in the same mess again! I was allowed by my good lady wife to have the small back bedroom in our retirement home as a study and 'Man Den.'

I had it fitted out office wise, especially with desk, book shelves and CD racks. But horror upon horror, the books acquired since 2001 are now spilling out into the loft. With my 'wonky legs' and bad balance Barbara has to stand at the bottom of the loft ladder whilst I ascend to my hoard above and descend again hands full. 'I'll tell your daughter of you,' I am told. 'She'll come and sort you out!'

So how does all this work out? Well, friend Roger and I meet once a month to discuss what we are reading. Two books each are produced, one serious and one 'whatever.' We were curates together during the early '60's of the last century and have stayed in touch ever since. So we meet for coffee and discuss our books and then we adjourn for a good lunch and the odd glass of wine. In our talks we often bemoan the state of the good old C of E and agree that we had the best of it and wouldn't change with today's incumbents!

We both agree that we can now read the New Testament not just for exams, sermons and bible groups but for the sheer wonder of what its contents tell us. Only by reading with the 'brakes off' can it enter the soul. For instance, to read the Gospel of St Mark through at one sitting makes the story come alive as you see the wholeness of what its unknown author is telling you. I commend you to do just that this Lent and then ask yourself what impact it has made on you. Who is this man whose story leaps from the pages at you? If you are held by it read the other three stories of his life and all the letters written by his 'fans.' Never mind what you think about the church, its history and what it teaches. What do you think about this man? Who and what was he? Is he someone that you could follow?

I often ask myself why are people so frightened to pick up this book? I'm sure that you must have a copy somewhere in your home. In any case they are easily available. Written in one of my oldest copies someone has written these words for me.

This is the Book whose leaves display
Christ the true and living way.
Read it with diligence and care
Read it and you will find him there.

Rev. Roy Baker

HOPE FOR JUSTICE

This is the letter of thanks from Hope for Justice. We sent them the money donated earlier for refugees.

Dear all at St. Luke's Church,

Thank you so much for the wonderful gift of £878.06 from your church. Please pass on our grateful thanks to your church family and also find enclosed a card from our Head of Church Partnerships, Craig Prest.

Your generosity means we can bring freedom and hope to victims of modern slavery- victims like Shona* (name changed to protect identity). Shona was trafficked for sexual exploitation and forced to work against her will in shops and restaurants, with her ID documents under the control of her trafficker. She lived through a nightmare of threats and beatings for years, leaving her traumatised.

After her rescue, Hope for Justice advocated for Shona to receive specialist counselling and supported accommodation. We helped her get the care she needed to address her underlying trauma and help her start to rebuild her life. We coordinated several solicitors to work on her highly complex legal issues that were holding her back.

She embraced the support offered and is now living independently, confidently moving forward with her life. She said: "The gratitude I feel about Hope for Justice gives me motivation and power to look towards my future in a very positive way. I want to make my future much brighter than my past and take every day like a gift from God."

We are seeing justice delivered and freedom achieved thanks to churches like yours who, like us, want to live in a world free from slavery. Your generous gift takes us a step closer. Thank you.

JOHN RUSSELL NELSON

(4th August 1932 – 29th December 2019)



I have known John for the best part of 20 years through my association with him at St Luke's Church, particularly in respect of being a member of the PCC Communications Committee (latterly the Magazine Group) of which John was Chairman. When researching this article, what was said to me about John by many people who knew him more intimately than I did, was his persuasive nature in getting people on board to achieve what was required, notably within his remit of church communications, but was also evident when acquiring regular advertisements / sponsors to support the church magazine and biennial calendar.

The above is of no surprise in that his 'day job' for 25 years or so was management orientated - from his appointment at the Liverpool College of Commerce in 1965 and evolving along the way into Head of Management Studies at the old Liverpool Polytechnic, now part of John Moores University. He was a founder member of MODEM (Managerial and Organisational Disciplines for the Enhancement of Ministry) in 1993 – 'to serve both the Church and the business communities at large by promoting dialogue and sharing insights on best practices'. He was editor of the MODEM *Newsletter* and edited MODEM's first book, *Management and Ministry* (Canterbury Press 1996). In the middle of our interregnum, the titles of two MODEM books caught my eye. He also edited and co-edited these respectively: *How to Become a Creative Church Leader* (Canterbury Press 2008) and *101 Great Ideas for Growing Healthy Churches* (Canterbury Press 2012). Upon retirement John dedicated his expertise in management and journalism to St Luke's Church and the Liverpool Diocese (as management consultant, working with the late Bishop of Liverpool, David Sheppard). He worked on the first staff appraisal team for clergy in the diocese, and also with Churches Together (locally and nationally). His commitment was rewarded with an invitation to a special service with the Pope at Westminster Abbey and an invitation to a Queen's Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. He contributed regular articles and newsletters to local newspapers (Formby Times) and magazines, often under the heading of 'Nelson's Column'.

John was quite keen on his sport, playing rugby for Balshaws Grammar School Leyland Lancashire, later representing Preston Grasshoppers Rugby

Union Club, and also playing football and badminton. Kath, his wife to be, also attended Balshaws and both went to the local parish church of St Andrew within the closely knit post war neighbourhood of Leyland. After a PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate of Education) in Leeds and National Service in the Royal Air Force John worked in training with Rolls Royce Derby. However, he developed a love for Bentley cars. He rode in one, drove one, but never owned one! John married Kath in 1958 and moved to Newport for his new job with the NCB (National Coal Board). Their four children were all born in South Wales and so were, as John often liked to boast, eligible to play for Wales – at what sport I'm not quite sure!

His interest in the written word was not solely confined to church ministry. When arriving in Formby in 1965 to take up his post at the Liverpool College of Commerce he developed a passion for golf. This led to 'golf journalism' – national magazine features on The (British) Open and regular writing and editing for his local golf club, Hillside. He even went to the States as a visiting golf correspondent to the US Open.

John's competitive edge extended to board games like chess, card games like bridge, and a determination to solve crosswords and sudoku. He always wanted to win – fairly and honestly "I might add" as his strong Anglican faith would accept nothing less. Another side to John's character was his love for art and music – brass bands and Welsh Male Voice Choirs particularly. He could play the piano (by ear only) and the bass drum – further strings to his bow.

John had a long, interesting, varied and full life. His achievements were considerable and the Church in general and St Luke's especially owe him a great deal. His delegative style of management was obvious in all he attempted and was always backed up with dedicated monitoring. He never left anyone in isolation but worked alongside them to get the task completed, always being fully supportive. What shone through looking back and knowing him more and more over the years was his 100% commitment to get people working as a team for the good of the whole. John was an excellent communicator with an engaging and persuasive smile.

He leaves behind a truly loving and extended family of four children, several grandchildren and a great grandchild, along with numerous friends and colleagues.

Thank you, John, I'll miss you a lot, we all will.

(Compiled with the help of John's widow, Kath, and the family).

Ken Davies

TESTIMONY FROM GEOFF WHEELER AS TOLD BY IRENE POWELL.

Having read the book, "Lord, Teach us to Pray" and noted the testimonies at the back, I began thinking about my own testimony of God's love and answered prayer and decided to share it with others.

I had been a churchgoer since my early childhood but as an adult I stopped attending as my career took up more and more of my time.

I have always believed that we are all God's children and He has put us on earth for a purpose - and when that purpose has been fulfilled He will take us back home to Himself.

I went on an Alpha course several years ago and remember hearing the Bible words of Jesus in Matthew 7 "knock and the door will open". A couple of days later I heard on the radio, a Jim Reeves song, "Welcome to my World" which also included the words, "knock and the door will open". I prayed and asked God to renew my faith. Later that day another Jim Reeves song was on the radio, this time it was "I love you because". I just knew my prayer had been answered.

One Bible verse which continues to mean a lot to me is Isaiah 41: 13 - "For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your hand and says to you, do not fear, I will help you."

Last year I was diagnosed with terminal cancer in my bones, lungs and prostate.

Soon after, on a dull and cloudy day, I was sat in a chair and I prayed to God, asking Him to hold me in His healing hands and in some way to let me know He had heard my prayer. There was just a slight break in the clouds and a bright beam of sunlight shone through the window directly on to me. I knew God had heard and that He was with me, helping me through this difficult time.

On 16th December last year, having been receiving hormone treatment and other medication for the prostate cancer, I returned to the hospital to see if it had made a difference. Previously, my blood test for PSA levels was extremely high at nearly 8,500 (Normal for a healthy male is 4) On 16th I had a follow up PSA test and myself and my oncologist were absolutely amazed. The level had reduced to just 7.5!!!! So many

people had been praying and God had certainly answered all our prayers.

Even though my illness is still terminal, I am so grateful for all the continuing prayers and especially to our wonderful God who, in the words of that favourite verse, is still holding my hand and helping me each day.

**WHAT'S ON FOR THE ELDERLY IN MARCH
(A LISTED MONTHLY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS
COMPILED IN AGREEMENT BY ST LUKE'S, ST PETER'S
AND HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCHES, FORMBY
METHODISTS, ELIM PENTECOSTAL CHURCH AND
FORMBY LIBRARY)**

St Peter's Church

The Saturday Crew* – Saturday 7th March 10.30-12noon in the Bier House, Green Lane.

Singing for Fun* – Monday 2nd March 2.00-3.30pm in St Peter's Parish Hall, Paradise Lane, Formby.

ADVANCED NOTICE – A Relaxed Easter Service at St Peter's Church, Sunday 5th April, 2.30pm. A 30 minute Palm Sunday Easter service followed by refreshments.

(*Anyone living with Memory Loss is ESPECIALLY welcome at these events). For further information of the above, contact St Peter's Parish Office 01704 871171 or email: stpetersformby@gmail.com (website: www.stpetersformby.co.uk).

Circular F1 and F2 stop outside church.

St Luke's Church Meeting Room (St Luke's Church Road)

Tuesday Lunch – Tuesday 3rd and 17th March 12noon (donations for lunch).

Circular F3 stops nearby.

Formby Methodist Church (Elbow Lane)

Memory Café (organised by the Alzheimer's Society) – Thursday 12th March 2.00-4.00pm. Anyone living with dementia, along with family and friends, is welcome to attend.

Formby Carers Support Group – every Friday 2.00-4.00pm. It is a friendly group who meet for a cuppa and chat with occasional activities. All carers are welcome, along with the person they care for.

Formby Befriending Scheme Coffee Club – Tuesday 3rd March (first Tuesday of each month) 2.00-4.00pm.

Formby Library (01704 874177)

Coffee Morning – 10.30-12noon Thursday 5th March.

Reading and Creative Writing Group – fortnightly Friday sessions from

2.15pm on 13th and 27th March.

Family History Help Desk – research your family tree with help from the Liverpool & SW Lancashire Family History Society. First Tuesday of the month 3rd March 10.15-12.00noon.

Monthly talk titled Community Archaeology around Liverpool Bay by Chris Kolonko – one of several national projects being undertaken by the charity Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network www.citizen.org.uk - Tuesday 10th March 2.00pm. Booking in advance advised.

National Trust Consultation Day – information drop-in for news on local projects currently being undertaken in the area – Saturday 14th March 10.00-2.00pm.

Edible Garden – Wednesday mornings, contact Library for details.

Beyond the War Memorials – www.Seftonwarmemorials.org**Read and relax with Orla the dog** – come along and meet Orla, the friendly therapy dog, who is excited to meet children, adults with autism, dementia or mental health difficulties. Contact Library for more information and to make an appointment.

Elim Pentecostal Church (93 Church Road Formby registered charity 251549) – Meeting Point 1.30pm Monday 23rd March – singer Jill Fielding will bring her unique blend of Irish, Country and 50s/60s music. Afternoon tea served at 2.30pm. (Ring Valerie on 01704 873452 for further information).

Formby Friends of the Alzheimer's Society, Luncheon Club Family (Rosemary Lane) - varied programme – Saturday 7th March 10.30-12.30pm (light refreshments); call Vicky or Bob on 01704 873317 for further information.

Dementia Awareness Talk – Thursday 19th March 7-9pm at the Fire Station (Liz Foggin - 01704 870404 for details).

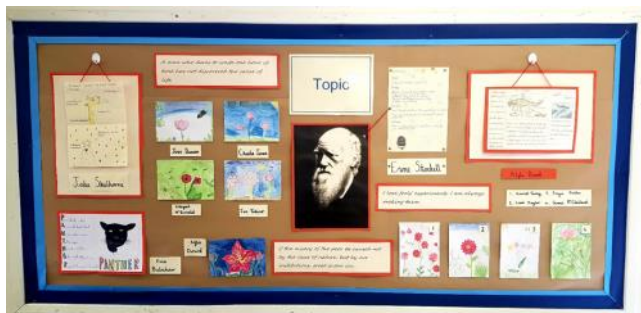
Ken Davies

KINGSLEY & CO

On a cold, wet December afternoon, we received a warm welcome at Kingsley & Co, the new literacy and personal development project which has been set up by the Bootle based charity YKids in the Strand shopping centre. The shop unit which is located in the Lower Mall alongside other community and charity projects has been transformed into a classroom, bookstore and small café, attractively and imaginatively decorated and furnished using the exploration theme. The project is named after the explorer Mary Kingsley. In addition to selling the children's books that have been donated at very reasonable prices, the project runs Storytime sessions twice a week, weekly drama and poetry workshops and creative workshops on Saturdays. The shop is currently open on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The purpose of our visit had been to drop off some of the books that had been donated following our appeal last autumn. Judging from the enthusiastic customers that we saw, the stocks will soon need to be replenished! Thank you to all who donated.

YKids hope that this project will contribute to improving literacy rates in Bootle and inspiring children and young people to achieve their full potential
Hillary Griffin

ST. LUKE'S SCHOOL NEWSPAPER



This week in St Luke's Primary School, we have done some charcoal drawings of plants and trees for our topic work (which is all about evolution) in our sketch books. In our classrooms, we have topic walls that display the wonderful work of some children. We have also done water colour pictures of flowers and have also done pieces on Charles Darwin.

In a few weeks time, some year five and six pupils are taking part in a swimming gala at Formby pool, some of us have also been taking part in a dance and drama club which is leading up to a show at the Atkinson theatre. It is called the 2020 NOW festival.

We'd like to say a big thank you to Mrs Morris for helping us rehearse!

We've also been taking part in an indoor athletics club. It is run by Mr Williams who is our PE and sports coordinator. Mr Hardman and Mr Green have also been holding boys football trials throughout the week.

Children all throughout the school have been submitting how we got to school using a website called Travel Tracker. At the end of each week, we can earn a badge for walking. This has helped us to get fitter because some people have asked their parents to park further away.

By Harriet Tunley and Evie Balshaw

NEW PATIENT AND FAMILY KITCHEN AT SHYIRA HOSPITAL

These are photos from Bishop Augustin of the new patient/family kitchen at Shyira Hospital, paid for from the large donation to the Shyira Trust.



The kitchen being inspected



Prayers being said to inaugurate the building



The building from outside
As Jane says, God is amazing!

4TH ST LUKE'S GUIDES



As ever, our girls have been busy with a variety of activities. With the modern world progressing the way it is, and the ever growing presence of social media an inevitable part of our lives, this term we have been working on 'brand me.' This involves the girls thinking about what makes them unique, and trying not to compare themselves to others but rather celebrating their differences. They have been encouraged to share their talents, and this has seen us all singing in different languages such as Latin and an African language. The girls also learnt part of the Haka (which was something of a challenge for the leaders to teach!) We have been playing sports, such as dodgeball, and the arty amongst the girls got to shine when they were asked to do a self portrait.

When Valentine's Day came around, rather than the usual cards to give to loved ones, we decided to think about the tragedy that has unfolded in Australia, and write a letter to a unit over there. They are going to be posted and hopefully this is the start of a pen-pal relationship for the girls. The girls also made 2 friendship bracelets - they are keeping one and the other is going to be sent with their letter.

A recent tradition that has started in the last 12 months is a joint meeting every term with the 8th St Luke's Brownies. Before Christmas, our joint meeting consisted of Christmas crafts, including making a Christmas stocking and decorating gingerbread men (cue me baking 96 of them in my not-so-very-large kitchen, but hey, we got there!). We are looking forward to another meeting this term which will be centred around Mother's Day. We have realised that these joint meetings are great fun for the girls, and are also an important stepping stone for the Brownies, as they get to meet some of the older girls and the fear about moving to a different unit is reduced.

Vicki Jennings (Assistant Unit Leader)

